THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) No assurance has been given to European Union regarding signing of CTBT by India.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Government's decisions on matters concerning national security are based on considerations of national interest alone.

(d) The EU has two nuclear weapon States-France and UK as its members. The two countries maintain a nuclear weapons arsenal. However, both have signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) which prohibits explosive nuclear testing in any environment.

(e) Government is pursuing a strategic dialogue with France and the UK. There is no place in such dialogues for pressure or coercion.

Pak's offer for bilateral talks

2088. PROF. M. M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Pakistani Government have offered for talks on the bilateral issues including Kashmir issue;

(b) if so, whether Government have accepted this offer;

(c) if so, the issues to be discussed with Pakistan;

(d) the details of the conditions to be put by Government for this talks; and

(e) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) to (e) Pakistan frequently makes calls for a resumption of talks with India, purely for the purposes of international propaganda, while continuing simultaneously with its state sponsorship of cross-border terrorism in the State of Jammu and Kashmir and elsewhere in India, and with its hostile propaganda against India. Government is of the view that Pakistan must abandon its state sponsorship of cross border terrorism and hostile propaganda against India, so that an environment appropriate for dialogue is created. These are not pre-conditions, but the essential ingredients for any meaningful dialogue.